

The ART of  
Good Husbandry,  
Or, the Improvement of  
**TIME:**  
*- Being a sure way to get and keep*  
**MONEY.**

WHEREIN

Is prescribed several RULES for Merchants, Shop-Keepers,  
and Mechanick Tradesmen, (as well Servants as Masters)  
how they may Husband their TIME to the best advantage;  
the Loss whereof is the sole Cause of Poverty in this  
City and Nation.

LIKEWISE

The Loss of a Mans TIME spent in a Tavern, Coffee-house, or Ale-house,  
Computed. Also Instructions to all sorts of People, how to order  
their Business for the future, both to the enriching of Themselves and  
their Families.

---

In a Letter to Mr. R. A. By R. T.

---

Calish Petrusson, August 7<sup>th</sup> 1679. Roger L'Estrange.

---

London, Printed for J. G. in the Year, 1679.



997



*The Art of Good Husbandry, or the improvement of TIME; being a sure way to get and keep MONEY: In a Letter to a Friend.*

SIR,

**I**N Compliance to your late Requests, obliging me to write to you as soon as I came to *London*, I have sent you the result of a few serious Minutes concerning the great decay of Trade and want of Money, which is now the general Cry of all people both in City and Country; the Grounds and Reasons of which, many have attempted to find out, by curious Inquiries into the several Laws and Statutes made for the promoting of TRADE, supposing the non-execution of those Laws to be the occasion of it. To this end large discourses have been made concerning the Decay of the *Fishing-Trade*, several Proposals offered by ingenious persons for the restoration of it; and the great Advantages that would ensue thereupon; with the many Damages destructive to Trade in general, that arise from the Inquiries into the *Wool-Trade*, alledging the Exportation of Wooll, the Importation of *Forraine* Manufactory, and the permission of *Forrainers* to work here, to be the chief cause of that decay of TRADE and want of MONEY which every person complains of.

Now though the Grounds and Reasons before mentioned are guarded with so many Probabilities, and seeming rational Demonstrations, that every understanding person will be ready at the first view, to hold up his finger and give his Assent to them; yet upon critical Inspection, or more curious Survey, we shall find them to be only Circumstantial.

There is something more material which is near us, that we overlook by looking so far off; that is, The little Value or Price we set upon that inestimable Jewel TIME, which most people slight like the *Cork* in the *Fable*, if they cannot make use of it to satisfy their Lascivious Appetites. It is the industrious Hand that enricheth the Land, and not the contriving Pate. The Wasps and Hornets, by their Rapine, bring to their Nests more Honey at once, than the industrious Bees can at many times; and yet for all this, they usually dye for want in the Winter; whilst the industrious Bees by continual Labour and improvement of TIME, gather sufficient to serve themselves in the Winter, and can afford their Masters a liberal Share out of their plentiful Stock.

I shall first begin with the *Inferiour Rank of People*, for those are the persons most concerned in this general Complaint, and shew them how they may remedy what they complain of.

First, Let them be diligent and industrious in their several Trades and Callings.

Secondly, Let them avoid all such idle Society that squander away a great deal of TIME at a cheap rate.

I shall instance in those Sober and Civil Conventions, as at *Coffee-Houses* and *Clubs*, where little Money is pretended to be spent, but a great deal of precious Time lost, which the person never thinks of, but measures his Expences by what goes out of his Pocket; Nor considers what he might have put in by his Labour, and what he might have saved, being employed in his Shop. As for Example:

A Mechanick Tradesman, it may be, goes to the *Coffee-House* or *Ale-House* in the Morning, to drink his Mornings Draught, where he spends Two-pence, and in Smoaking and Talking, consumes at least an Hour: In the Evening, about Six a Clock, he goes to his Two-penny Club, and there staves for his Two-pence till Nine or Ten: here is Four Pence spend, and Four Hours at least lost, which in most Mechanick Trades, cannot be reckoned

reckoned less than a Shilling; and if he keep Servants, they may lose him near as much by idling, or spoiling his Goods, which his presence might have prevented. So that upon these Considerations, for this his supposed Groar, (a Dayes expence) he cannot reckon less than Seven Groats; which comes to Fourteen Shillings a Week (Sundays excepted,) which is Thirty six pound ten shillings a year. A great deal of Money in a poor Tradesmans Pocket,

Now the same may be applied to the higher Trades and Professions, whose loss of TIME is according to the Degrees or Spheres they move in; and yet this is the least thing thought of. We are apt to favour and excuse our selves, and impute a general Calamity to things afar off, when we our selves are the occasion of it at home.

It will be necessary before I proceed, to take notice of one *Objection*, which seems to be most material, *viz.* That some mens business lies Abroad, and cannot be so well managed at Home, and that these Meetings or Societies are advantageous to them. As first, Merchants by these *Clubs* or *Meetings* have Intelligence of Ships going out and coming in, and also of the Rare and Prices of Commodities, and meet with Customers by accident, which possibly might never make inquiry at their Houses or Ware-houses. The like Excuses all men of Business and Trade pretend.

To this I answer: That indulging this Custome, hath made it, seemingly Necessary; but yet there is no absolute necessity for it: for the *Exchange* is appointed for the Merchants Intelligence, and his Ware-house is his Shop. And to other Tradesmen, their Shops are their Markets; to which, if they would be referred, they might better themselves, and improve that TIME they spend in Taverns and Coffee-houses, to a greater advantage: For by these idle Meetings they lose not only what they spend, but what might be improved by the overseeing their Goods, and examining their Accounts, which they now wholly  
trust



trust to the Fidelity of a Servant or Servants; who being led by their Masters Examples, grow idle and extravagant; and knowing their Masters sure, make sure for themselves; furnishing themselves for their debauched Assignations, and now plot and invent the means and wayes for their extravagant Meetings, which are the occasion and ruine of many Masters, and hopeful Servants; all which might be prevented by the diligent eye of the Master; the want of which, is the occasion of all the Debauchery, Poverty and Misery which every place cries out of. From this negligence and loss of TIME comes many more inconveniencies, that heaps on Poverty, and entailes it upon themselves and Generations.

From these *Clubs* and *Societies* (how Civil soever they appear to be) it is impossible in any such Meeting, but some of them are given to Vice, and it is probable, the greatest part: by this means is introduced Gaming, Foolish Wagers, Wenching, Swearing, and other Debaucheries. And usually at parting, or breaking up of these Clubs, they divide themselves according to their several Inclinations or Dispositions; some go to a Tavern, some to a convenient place for Gaming, others to a Bawdy-House, by which means the Family is neglected, and not governed as it ought to be; the Wife (though possibly a very virtuous and careful Housewife) exasperated by the extravagancies of her Husband, and foreseeing Poverty and Want attending her and her Children, grows desperate; and, it may be, yeilds to some Temptations that are too too common in these dayes; by which means, oftentimes an Estate that was gathered by Grains, is scattered abroad by Bushels.

The Servants too, by these Examp'es, fall into the same Vices, and many times ruine both themselves and their Friends, who have strained their Estates to the utmost, to get them into those places, and engaged their Friends for their Fidelity, hoping that their Industry might afterwards make them some retalliation; all which is frustrated; and they become Vagrants and Extravagants

travagants, by which means City and Country are filled with so many idle persons, that live only by Spoyle and Rapine; or like Droans, feeding upon others Labours; the greatest part of their business being to undo what others do; and to devise or contrive ways to cosen, supplant or cheat each other; accounting it as lawful to get Twenty Shillings by Cheating or Playing, as by the most honest and industrious labour; so that by this means our Commodities, which might be employed by industrious Manufactory, lie waste; and no wonder that we complain for want of TRADE, when the hands that should be employed about it, are idle; for if a strict inquiry were made into the City and Suburbs, of all the persons that are capable of work, either in the *Wooll* or *Fishing-Trade*, as Men, Women, and Children from seven years upwards, that are now all together idle, or not employed to any purpose in Trade, there would not be found less than an Hundred and fifty thousand, that live like Droans, feeding upon the Stock of others Labours.

Now, it is our own negligence and idleness that brings Poverty upon us; for if these idle persons were employed, we need not cry out of the *Exportation of Wooll*, neither would industrious Forrainers have that encouragement to work here, if we would mind it our selves; but, if we will not improve our Manufactory, we cannot blame others for doing of it.

Now it will be supposed, that if those Laws for setting idle people to work, punishing Vagrants, rectifying disorders in publick Houses, all this might be prevented: This commonly is our *Last Shift*, and thus are we apt to excuse our selves, and lay the burden of our own faults upon the shoulders of our Governours; we may be very sensible, that we have in this Kingdom as good Laws as in any place in the World; we live under such a King, that for Prudence and Wisdom, no Empire or Kingdom can make comparison with us; nor can Laws be better executed than in this Kingdom: But it is impossible that the eye of Magistracy can see into every Corner; every single person hath a Cor-  
poration

poration within himself; every Family is a petty Principality, of which the Master or Mistress is Vicegerent. It lies upon every Private Person to put in execution those Laws of Nature within himself, that will inform him what he ought to do, and what he ought not to do. Every Governour or Governess of a Family, should take care by their good examples, to instruct their Families; and severely to punish such Disorders as shall be committed in their House or Houses, as far as their power doth extend; the remainder they may leave to the Magistrates, who will not be wanting on their parts.

Now since every one is guilty, let us endeavour to mend, and no longer complain of Want, since it is in our power to enrich our selves and our Country. *The industrious Hand needs not make a Leg to Fortune for Wealth; Nor the honest Heart bend his knee to Flattery, to gain him a Reputation.* These are the Heads of what afterwards I shall present you with, methodically handled in a *Treatise*, which as this finds acceptance, will ere long see the light.

*In the meantime I am*

*Yours to command,*

R. T.



FINIS.



